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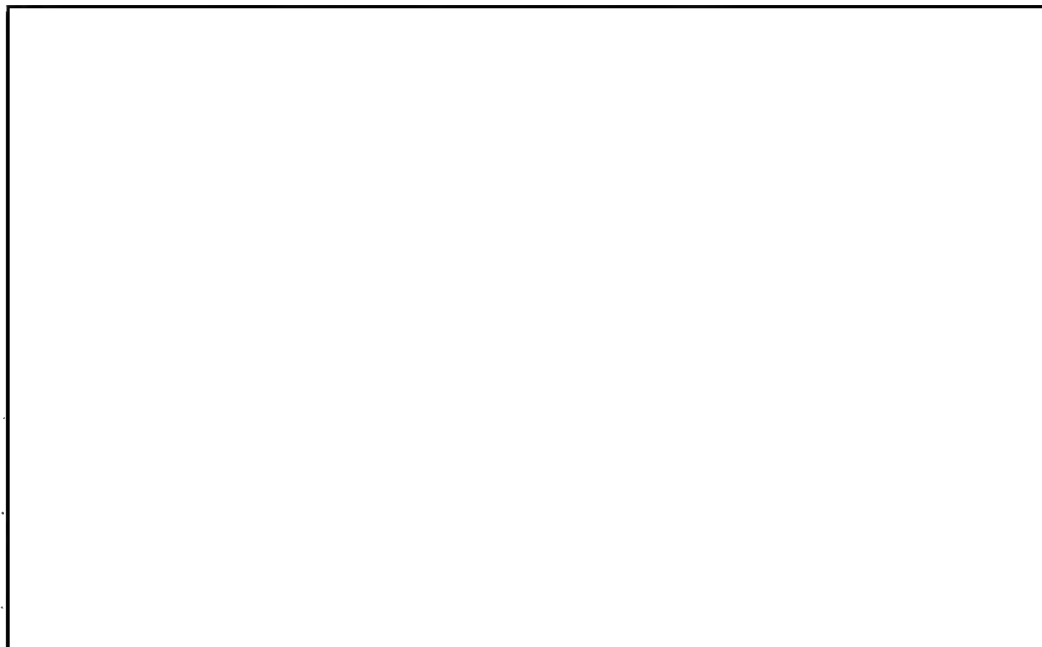
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France-Israel: De Gaulle hopes that his embargo on all arms to Israel, including spare parts, will force the Israelis to take a more flexible stand toward negotiations.

The French President probably interpreted the Israeli attack on the Beirut airport not just as a sign of even greater Israeli intransigence but as the possible harbinger of more aggressive actions that could lead to new and dangerous turmoil in the Middle East. Another factor in the timing of the embargo may have been the reported unauthorized removal from a French shipyard of two patrol boats built for Israel. The boats. [redacted]

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[redacted] de-  
parted Cherbourg in late December and early January. [redacted]

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France traditionally has been Israel's primary supplier of arms. Of Israel's current inventory of 258 fighter aircraft, 228 are French built. Spare parts for these aircraft were received regularly, even after Paris announced, following the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967, that it was holding up delivery of 50 Mirage 5 aircraft purchased by Israel. Israel's aircraft industry produces a wide range of spare parts, but no engines. An expanded embargo could result in the grounding within the next few months of Mirage IIIs now in Israel's inventory and in an immediate reduction in flying hours.

Israel's hopes of receiving the 50 embargoed Mirages in the near future would seem now to have faded. The effect of the new restrictions on France's delivery of the MD-620 short-range surface-to-surface missile is not known. [redacted]

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Cuba: Havana has not yet reacted to the mass flight of refugees into the US naval base at Guantanamo early on 6 January. Subsequent information indicates that the refugee group consisted largely of families representing a cross section of non-professional occupations. There is no information yet available concerning the planning and organization of the escape.

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